

## STORMING THE CITY.

HOW THE TURKS OVERCAME THE WALLS OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

The Emperor Constantine, with barely 4,000 men, holding out two months against the vast army of Mohammed, his faithful troops and heroic death.

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faithful adherents swore that its death should be as glorious as its life had been noble and grand.

Byzantium (the ancient name for the city) had stood as a light to the world throughout the dark ages when Rome was but a city wherein wallowed barbarian ignorance and brutality. But the scepter had passed back to Rome, the seat of a revived Latin civilization. Only the Greek emperor and his venerated capital, and court, with a small circle of half-hearted and semi-independent states, remained to reflect the ancient splendor of the first Constantinian and his brilliant successors.

Clinging by a desperate but gradually loosening hold to the eastern edge of Christendom, surrounded by vigorous and fanatical Moslem foes whose mosques cast shadows upon temples sacred to the Christian God, and actually owing its preservation to the cautious policy of the sultan—such was the state of the empire in the middle of the century that beheld the discovery of America and that marked the reformation in northern and western Europe.

Constantinople in 1453 was a city of 100,000 inhabitants. Its shape was that of a triangle, one side extending along the rock-bound shore of the sea of Marmara, another along the gentle banks of the River Bosporus, and the third, six miles in extent, from water to water—that is, from river to sea—inland and facing the territory occupied by the Turk. On the land side no barrier to Moslem invasion existed outside the ancient city walls. The wall was of two lines, very massive and formidable to look at, but not very strong. In front of the outer wall was a ditch 100 feet deep.

The contest did not begin until a long deal of eastern diplomacy had raised the tempers of both sides to the highest. Mohammed, who was a young man of 23 years, told his grand vizier, when the latter urged peace, that the sultan turned on his bed all night long from one side to the other. His bed was filled with cushions and pillows, and he was in the habit of turning for the world's great conquerors, whose deeds he knew in detail, and his soul was fired by a fanatical notion that Allah had destined him for a great conquest. Having been warned off from Constantinople, as he thought, by the weak yet valiant emperor, who was gliding into old age, he could not drive out the idea that the hour had come and the prophet demanded the overthrow of the power of the cross in the east.

Constantine, aware of his plight, deserted as he was by the Christian kingdoms of the west, offered to give allegiance to the sultan and pay a large annual tribute. If only the possession of the holy city should be allowed to remain with the Christians. When Mohammed met the crisis with true Roman firmness and dignity. Said he, "I release thee from all oaths and treaties with me, and closing the gates of my capital I will defend my people to the last drop of my blood."

No previous Ottoman army had ever taken the field with the numbers that gathered around Mohammed II, when, on the 6th of April, 1453, he spread his carpet within sight of the towers and domes of Constantinople, muffled a prayer as he faced the holy Mecca and pronounced the signal to the "true believers" that the siege of the city was begun. A force of 400,000 men, say many accounts, took part in the siege. Others make it 150,000 to 200,000 trained soldiers and an equal number of irregulars.

To two fact—old historians agree—namely, that when it came to actual fighting the assailants outnumbered the defenders at least twentyfold and perhaps thirtyfold, and that the artillery of Mohammed was superior to any other in existence at that time and was the first to be used in battering walls. One gun had been specially prepared for the purpose and threw a stone projectile weighing 600 pounds. Several other enormous guns were in position, and altogether 60 cannon faced the land wall of the city.

The vast Mohammedan camp, which contained many unwilling converts, among them Christian slaves and prisoners, was hedged about by a corps of Spahies and



A RALLY TO THE BREACH. Janizaries, specially trained from youth up to be as fanatical and cruel as the sultan himself. Armed with lance and scimitar, their duty was to cut down any soldier who rushed into the street, beating their breasts and crying: "Lord of mercy! What is to happen now?"

The smallest Turkish cannon balls weighed from 50 to 800 pounds, more than the largest known to the Greeks. However, a week of bombardment passed without breaking the walls. At the end of that time, about 9 o'clock one evening, there was a sudden clash of cymbals, a crash of

drums and loud shouts and trumpets along the Turkish camp, and dark masses of warriors leaped with frantic shouts toward the city gates. Along the battlements and on the lofty towers the reports of guns, the clang of arms and cries of "Allah" were made as an answering din, which the shrieks of terrified women and children within the city seemed to a roar like thunder.

The Turks reached the moat and even the glacis, but were beaten off at midnight after a most heroic struggle for that filled the ditch with helpless victims. Two days later the Greeks were encouraged by a second victory, with odds as great as those confronting them on the walls. Early in the morning four Greek ships loaded with troops and corn from the Grecian Isles sailed into the harbor and were quickly attacked by a Turkish fleet of 145 sail.

The Greeks were the better seamen, and with their heavy ships ran down the Turks, riddling them with cannon shot and repelling boarders with showers of liquid fire. To inspire the faithful, the sultan urged his horse into the sea, and with frantic cries and gestures prayed and threatened, but to no avail. His fleet ran away in confusion, and the Greek ships anchored under the city walls. More than 12,000 Turks were slaughtered in that affair, and the sultan would have quit the siege had it not been for the voice of his military commanders. They were for war to the end.

Mohammed's enterprise was backed by fanatical zeal, boundless riches and a despotism that knew no restraint. The failure in the assault and the naval fiasco taught him that he must encompass the city by sea and land. His ships were numerous, but were kept at a distance by a chain that the Greeks had stretched across the entrance to the inner harbor. With an energy worthy of Napoleon he set to work and built a grassed shipway six miles long through a valley leading from the Bosphorus to the harbor, and in one night, during a bombardment on land, a fleet of 30 ships were rolled through.

As an object, some of the Greek captains volunteered to burn the Turkish fleet. A daring attempt was made in the night, but a traitor warned the Turks, and the fire-ships were received with a volley of cannon shot that sank the foremost of them, and the others hauled away. Other attempts to burn the ships failed, and the Turks at last anchored a floating battery so close as to bombard the city from the rear. Meanwhile three more desperate assaults were repulsed with the usual fearful slaughter of the fanatical Turks.

In each case the personal courage of the emperor saved the day. Only one commander on the walls could vie with Constantine in fighting ability and zeal. That was Jus-



MOHAMMED, THE GREAT CONQUEROR, infant, a Genoese captain, who led 500 of his countrymen. In the fourth assault the Turks made a breach, but the defenders under the eye of Constantine drove them out and followed beyond the walls. The emperor was so excited that he wanted to ride through and join the noble outside, but the imperial suite and guard kept him back.

The Turks succeeded in battering down the main tower at the Roman gate at the end of six weeks' cannonade. In front of another gate they rolled up an immense wooden tower, armored with layers of bull's hide. Secreted in the tower, the Turkish archers shot down the Greeks by hundreds. Constantine and Justinian grappled with these two evils in one night, and to the amazement of the sultan his wooden tower was burned to the ground with Greek fire thrown into it by men who climbed the outside walls with the nimbleness of squirrels, and a new tower was run up at the Roman gate in place of the one thrown down.

On the 28th of May, the eighth week of the siege, the fiery sultan gave the order for a grand assault the following day, but not without summoning Constantine to surrender under pain of the usual pillage and massacre if the assault failed. Constantine's advisers begged him to withdraw and save his life, but to the sultan he said, "We are prepared to die here, and to his friends, 'I will die here with you.' The sultan promised a kingdom to the first of his soldiers who should scale the walls and to the rest license to pillage for three days. The city's wealth, its silver, gold, silk and women will be yours," he said, "only the buildings and walls will be reserved for the sultan."

The first assault of 50,000 men was repulsed in an hour, the baffled wretches turning from death in front to find it on lance and sword points of the Spahies and Janizaries in the rear. A second line of mercenaries next advanced, and a cannon ball tore out a piece of the outer wall at the Roman gate. The Turks rushed through the breach, but were repulsed, and then a second ball tore down a section alongside the first. Through that column of Janizaries rushed and planted scaling ladders on the inner wall. Constantine and Justinian hurried to the breach, and the waves of Turks rolled back. Constantine cheered on his men, but unluckily Justinian was struck by a bullet and turned to leave. Constantine begged him to stand, but for once the hero was deaf to the appeal.

The Janizaries saw the confusion in the Greek ranks and returned to the attack. A giant named Hassan scaled the wall and died fighting manfully for the promised reward. Then a cry arose that the Turks had entered the city by another gate, and the emperor, followed by a band of noblemen, spurred on into another street to meet them. One by one they fell, and the emperor, left alone, fought on until he was cut down by some of the mob of invaders. Turks, who little knew their swordsmen, drank the blood of the last emperor of the Greeks. Sultan Mohammed's dearest friend, GEORGE L. KILMER.

Bound to Get the Worst of It. "Trouble!" said the night police reporter, as he turned away from the telephone, "there's nothing but trouble. Here, just this editor that there isn't a line of room and that he doesn't want a thing from me tonight."

"Well, then, just take a night off."

"Yes, but he goes on to notify me in an offhand sort of way that if I get into any good stories I'll just about cost me my job."

"Then if you get anything good just send in a little of it—just barely enough to outline a story."

"Well, I suppose I'll have to do that, and tonight he'll kick because there's so much of it, and tomorrow he'll kick because there wasn't more. When the paper's crowded, I'm bound to get the worst of it, no matter which way I play it."—New York Recorder.

Dr. Palmer—What an absurd expression! Who ever saw "Patience on a monument?"

De Witt—Well, perhaps not, doctor, but I've often seen monuments on your patients.—Truth.

## GROWTH OF THE UNITED STATES.

How the Greater Part of This Country Was Acquired.

When Independence was established, the bounds of the new country were extremely indefinite. The limits of the 13 states were known with reasonable exactness, though there were at the outset disputes both between the states and between the United States and the European governments whose possessions lay alongside ours. The first great acquisition of territory was that of Louisiana, which Spain had ceded to France, and which the Emperor Napoleon sold to the United States for \$15,000,000 in 1803, when Mr. Jefferson was president. Mr. Jefferson did not believe that the constitution permitted the United States to annex foreign territory and wished that an amendment should be adopted to sanction it, but the amendment failed after the annexation had been accomplished, and Mr. Jefferson stifled his scruples.

Louisiana, as acquired from France, included the territory bounded on the east by the Mississippi river, on the north by its source, on the north by the line of the British possessions, on the west by the Pacific ocean to the south line of Oregon. The other boundary follows the north line of California, Nevada and Utah the eastern base of the Rocky mountains and thence in a general southeasterly direction so as to include part of Colorado and most of Kansas and the Indian Territory and all of Arkansas and Louisiana to the Gulf of Mexico.

Florida was for many years the object of covetousness on the part of our government, which claimed now a part and now the whole as included in the Louisiana purchase. The United States finally obtained it from Spain in 1819, when Mr. Monroe was president. What was known as West Florida—including the part of Alabama in which Mobile is situated—had already been seized and held forcibly. Texas, originally a part of Mexico, set itself up as an independent republic in 1836. Its population consisted largely of bold and somewhat reckless adventurers from the southern states. In one year Texas had established independence after a sharp war with Mexico and a few months later applied for union with this country.

The question remained open until, having agitated American politics for many years and having cost Mr. Van Buren the Democratic nomination for president in 1844, it was finally settled in 1845. Texas was annexed and admitted as a state of the Union by a joint resolution approved by President Polk. California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico and the western part of Colorado were acquired by conquest. They were ceded to the United States at the close of the Mexican war, during Polk's administration in 1848. Nevertheless nearly \$30,000,000 was paid to Mexico in settlement of certain claims as the price of the territory.

Excepting West Florida, already referred to, this is the only territory gained by the sword. A strip of land in southern Arizona was not in the Mexican cession, but was bought in 1853, Pierce being president at the time, for \$10,000,000. Thus the country became possessed of all its present territory between Canada on the north and Mexico on the south. Alaska was purchased of Russia during Mr. Johnson's presidency in 1867, and the sum of \$7,200,000 was paid for it. Its total area is almost the same as that of all the territory obtained of Mexico by conquest and purchase.—Cincinnati Commercial Gazette.

## REALIZATION.

I wished one day, with Burns, some power would give me the gift by means of which myself I'd see, As to the watching world I seemed to be.

And, as it chanced, some fairy came my way, And granted me the wish I'd made that day, And, oh, it filled my soul with blank dismay.

For as I looked, ah, how my pride did fall! Against I staggered back against the wall! The world was not aware of me at all! —Charlotte Smith in Life.

## Position in Writing.

To the parent as well as the educator the position of the pupil when writing should be of the greatest interest. There is an alarming increase of spinal curvature and near sight in children of the present day goes without saying. There must be some reason for it. If we accept the statement of the Vienna commission of experts appointed to investigate the cause of this increase, we find it charged to the account of sloping writing, with its unavoidable fatigues.

If the pupil who slants his letters sits sideways to the desk (a very common position), not only is one shoulder usually higher than the other, but the head is commonly turned until a line connecting the pupils of the eyes is parallel to the line in which he is writing. Nature compels him to twist his neck so that one eye shall be the same distance from the letters he is making as the other. Unless he does turn his head, the eyes are not equidistant from his work, which tends to shorten the sight of one eye and lengthen that of the other. This accounts in large measure for the use of two glasses of different power for the same person, so frequently met with at the present time.—Popular Science Monthly.

## The Growth of a Metropolis.

Things seldom seen in New York nowadays: A runaway, a man trying to ascertain where he is from the sign on a lamp-post, sheep or steers being driven to slaughter houses, a man carried on a stretcher, girls selling newspapers, boys sweeping crosswalks, advertisements pasted on the curbstones, a torchlight parade, a chowder party heaping steam coming home, a goat south of Fifty-ninth street, a special attention called to one latest style of WIRE MATTRESSES, the best and cheapest ever brought to this country. Fine Lounge and Sofa Beds, at San Francisco prices. Complete Assortment of Baby Carriages, Cribs, Cradles and High Chairs.

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## Asking the Wrong Party.

"Some of you," said a political orator, "remind me of Johnny Bizim, who undertook to break the yearling bull, and to make sure he did not get away tied the rope around his waist. The breaking process angered the yearling, and he split a crack in the atmosphere toward the swamp. Johnny only hit the ground in the high places. In their mad career they passed a neighbor, who yelled to John, 'Where are you going?' 'Blanked if I know,' he replied as he sailed through the air. 'Ask the bull.'"—Northwest Magazine.

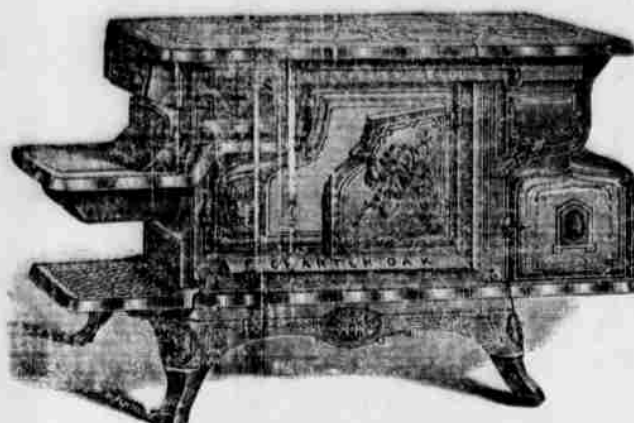
## Interactions of Chemical Molecules.

The genesis of chemical elements is now being studied with the application of the principles of gravitation. Modeled, in 1889, first proposed to apply Newton's Third Law, and now Rev. Dr. Houghton, in recently published papers, applies the three Newtonian laws to explain the interactions of chemical molecules, with this difference only, that atoms have a specific coefficient of attraction varying with the nature of the atom concerned, whereas the specific coefficient of gravity is the same for all bodies independent of their composition or matter.—Science.

## Not a Paying Occupation.

Hicks—What a chance for a fellow to grab these women's pocketbooks that they hold in their hands so temptingly! Wicks—Excellent, as you say. An industrious thief might snatch scores of 'em every hour and make as much as half a dollar a day.—Boston Transcript.

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